

apelike depiction of Afro-Mexicans. It was deplorable that the Mexican government would produce stamps that would remind Americans—white and black—of the humiliation and degradation of Sambo and Aunt Jemima. It is insulting that President Fox would defend the publication of this stamp as an example of our cultural misunderstandings, despite the call of the *Asociacion Mexico Negro*—a Mexican-based group representing the interests of over 50,000 blacks—for the recall of the stamps.

This is not simply an example of cultural differences. Afro-Mexicans deplore the comparison of being described as apelike and childlike, just as much as African-Americans. To say that it is acceptable to depict an entire race of people in one's country as childish apes is to not understand the universal impact and role of race in this world.

At a time when members of Congress are trying to find amicable ways of bringing our two countries together, the actions of President Fox's government apparently are to draw a line between us. President Fox has ridiculed the hard work and efforts of African-Americans. He has rejected repeated invitations to dialogue with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. His government has issued stamps that not only insult the character of his own people, but also those of Afro-descendant populations in the United States, and throughout the Americas.

I am disappointed in these acts by my friends in the Mexican government and by President Fox. I hope that they will reach out once again to those with whom they have worked here in the United States and put aside these insulting and racist stamps. For us to achieve greater cultural sensitivity on the part of the United States and to obtain greater racial sensitivity in the Americas, it is important to have an equal awareness and effort on the part of our international allies.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF POMPAÑO BEACH, FLORIDA

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Pompano Beach, Florida, which has been named as one of only ten cities nationwide designated as a 2005 All-America City by the National Civic League. I have represented the City of Pompano Beach since coming to Congress in 1981, and I take special pride in this recognition of their achievements.

The City of Pompano Beach was recognized for two programs which impact the community's youth, and an affordable housing project.

The Pompano Beach Junior Lifeguard Program which began as a small part-time recreational swimming program has grown into an annual recreation and education program for children ages nine to seventeen. The program partners parents and local schools in promoting activities which develop healthy lifestyles, sportsmanship and self-esteem in the community's youth. Childhood obesity has also been targeted with parents reporting improved eating habits, weight loss and increased muscle mass in their children.

The Kidz-N-The-Hood Program is a weekly TV show produced and scripted by kids of all ages, income levels and ethnic backgrounds. Developed to counteract the often negative and gratuitous images children are too often exposed to on television, the program receives accolades from parents and educators who report more attentive students, improved test scores and reduced drop out rates. Supported by a diverse community group including AT&T Broadband, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Pompano Middle School, Broward County Sheriff's Office, and the Broward County Urban League, the program has reached thousands of children through participation and viewing opportunities.

Pinnacle Village, a new affordable rental community, replaces a failed HUD subsidized housing complex which stood as an eyesore and haven for crime in the neighborhood. Frustrated by a failed project which had undergone numerous attempts at rehabilitation for a period of years, the public and private sectors worked together to improve the living conditions for dozens of families. The result was Pinnacle Village—148 town houses with one to three bedrooms. This project not only meets the needs of the resident families, it has had a positive impact on the surrounding community.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate the residents, officials, and the staff of the City of Pompano Beach whose efforts on behalf of their city have earned the title of 2005 All-America City.

TO REPORT ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE'S PARLIAMEN- TARY ASSEMBLY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report on the successes of the fourteenth annual session of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Parliamentary Assembly which convened in Washington, DC over the first five days of July. Over 800 parliamentarians and staff were in attendance, making it one of the largest assemblies in the Organization's history, and one of the most productive.

The theme of this year's session, "30 Years since Helsinki: Challenges Ahead" reminds us of the agreement that founded the OSCE, and the ideals which must guide us through the tests of the future. The Washington Declaration, a compendium of resolutions adopted at this year's session, is a testament to the excellent progress that has been made in central areas of social, economic, and human rights policy. The OSCE has maintained its position at the forefront of some of our world's most critical concerns; eradicating human trafficking, ensuring fair elections, combating social prejudice, and maintaining stable economic relationships between all nations.

Members of both branches of Congress play a central role in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Our delegation offered a resolution entitled "Combating involvement in trafficking

in human beings and sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeeping forces" that was adopted into the Washington Declaration. The practice of human trafficking is an affront to humanity, and must not be tolerated. According to the most recent Department of State estimates, between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked across borders each year worldwide, including 14,500 into the United States. Combined with trafficking within countries, the total figure is estimated at between 2 and 4 million. The OSCE, as the world's largest regional security organization, is uniquely positioned to take on this critical issue.

During this year's session, the U.S. delegation made major progress in international trade. Representative BEN CARDIN, Ranking Member of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, spearheaded a resolution urging the Mediterranean Partners to work with the Arab League in order to rescind the trade boycott of the State of Israel. The boycott has existed for almost half a century, and it is clear that a healthy economic relationship between the United States, Israel, and the Middle East will be central in the fight for a stable and more peaceful world.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to serve as the current President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and delighted to have been elected to a second term. The U.S. delegation was at the forefront of efforts to preserve the quality of the OSCE's election monitoring activities, the battle against anti-Semitism and efforts to set codes of conduct for peacekeepers and international representatives.

We were also privileged to welcome you, Mr. Speaker, and Secretary Rice, to address the Assembly and I am pleased to report that the conference was a major success.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask for unanimous consent that the statement of the Honorable Canadian Senator Jerry Grafstein be added to the RECORD immediately following this statement. Senator Grafstein was elected to a second term as Treasurer of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, a clear endorsement of his dedication, prudence and fine leadership. I thank him for his kind words, and I thank the whole Canadian delegation for their admirable contributions to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO- OPERATION IN EUROPE

FOURTEENTH PARLIAMEN- TARY ASSEMBLY

Hon. Jeremiah S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, yesterday the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe completed its fourteenth annual session in Washington, D.C. It lasted over five days and was attended by more than 1,000 parliamentarians and staff. It was probably the largest assembly in its history. The Washington Declaration, a compendium of all resolutions adopted, will be tabled in the Senate. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is composed of parliamentarians from 55 member states, and is the largest international organization dedicated to the advancement of democratic rights, human rights, and economic and security co-operation.

The Washington Declaration included a number of issues on which Canadian parliamentarians took the lead: trafficking in human beings; steps for cooperation in the Middle East; combating anti-Semitism; advancing the fight against corruption amongst parliamentarians and in the public

service; improving democratic surveillance of election monitoring; codes of conduct for peacekeepers and international representatives; and gender issues.

I was pleased to be re-elected for a third time as a Senior Officer and Treasurer and as Leader of the Liberal, Democratic and Reformer's Political group. I extend my appreciation and congratulations to our colleague, the Honourable Senator Di Nino, for his assiduous performance as head of the Canadian delegation. I intend to have the Senate consider a number of aspects of the Washington Declaration, which each parliamentary delegation was mandated to do under the declaration.

I would like to add a special word of congratulations to Speaker Dennis Hastert, of the House of Representatives, to our Congressional American hosts and to Congressman Alcee Hastings, who was re-elected President of the OSCE Parliamentary Association and who invited us to share an outstanding visit to George Washington's home on Mount Vernon on the Potomac. Our hosts also invited us to participate in the festivities on Capitol Hill for their July 4 celebration, together with over one million Americans. It was a memorable experience for all of us.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, July 11, 2005, I was delayed in the Cincinnati Airport due to a mechanical failure of my plane, a parts swap, and a new plane having to be brought in for my flight from Cincinnati to Washington. There were no other flight options for me to arrive in Washington before the votes occurred on H. Con. Res. 168 (Rollcall No. 363) and H. Res. 333 (Rollcall No. 364). Had I been here to cast my votes, I would have voted "aye" on both H. Con. Res. 168 and H. Res. 333 and with the RECORD to reflect as such.

As a member of the Human Rights Caucus and a stern believer that every human being has certain irrevocable rights, I stand in strong favor of both of these pieces of legislation. We cannot and should not stand by as gross human rights violations such as the kidnappings in Korea and the genocide in Darfur continue. I applaud my colleagues, Representative HENRY HYDE and Representative DONALD PAYNE, for introducing these bills and bringing them to the floor for our consideration.

Almost 3 years ago North Korean leader Kim Jong-il admitted that North Korea had ordered abductions of Japanese citizens and promised that it would never do so again. However, evidence has surfaced that the North Korean government has continued to order the abductions of numerous foreign citizens and has placed these captives, along with prisoners of war, in forced labor camps. To stand by and do nothing in response to these gross violations of human rights is unthinkable and this bill clearly states to Kim Jong-il and the North Korean government that the United States will not let this continue.

I am also pleased that we were able to debate H. Res. 333. I have been a huge supporter of our past funding for aid to Darfur and

our condemnation of the genocide occurring there and can think of no better way to complement these actions than by praying for and reflecting on this horrible situation. The better we personally understand this situation, the better we as a Congress will be able to respond to and prevent situations such as these from occurring in the future. As a man of faith, I will stand with my family, my colleagues, and fellow citizens and pray for the people of Darfur and reflect on the ongoing atrocities that they face on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, thank you again for allowing me to express my support for these two bills as I was unfortunately delayed on my way to Washington.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A NATIONAL WEEK-END OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION FOR DARFUR

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 11, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Congressman PAYNE's resolution H. Res. 333—supporting the goals and ideals of a National Weekend of Prayer and Reflection for Darfur. The violence and ongoing humanitarian challenges that the people of Darfur continue to face necessitate that we keep them in our thoughts and prayers, and continue to ensure that the Darfur issue remains firmly within the purview of U.S. policymakers, until a final resolution is reached.

Communities of faith in the United States have always played a role in eliciting action on an array of historic moral questions. From the anti-slavery and civil rights movements in this country, to the campaign to end the terrible Ethiopian famines of the 1980's, the power of faith was brought to bear in an attempt to address an issue of human suffering.

The ongoing crisis in Darfur is one such issue, that warrants the continued engagement of the American religious community—especially when engagement from other sources has, in some instances, been lacking. The Darfur conflict has so far claimed as much as 400,000 lives, and displaced at least 2.4 million. The United States has to its credit taken the lead among world powers in addressing the conflict by providing humanitarian assistance to the Darfuri people, and applying pressure to the Sudanese government. America's religious communities have been instrumental in compelling the United States government to become involved.

However, in recent months the Administration has been rather muted on the Darfur issue. Indeed, the Administration has backed away from classifying the actions of the Sudanese government and its Janjaweed militia as genocide, and U.S. and Sudanese officials have visited each other consistently in recent months. With the recent peace agreement between the Khartoum government and the oil-producing region of southern Sudan, as well as Sudanese cooperation on U.S. terrorism efforts, there is talk of the U.S. lifting sanctions on Sudan.

Such hospitable relations are very concerning, considering the fact that the situation

in the Darfur is still dire. While the killings in aggregate have decreased, the cease-fire is extremely fragile. In the absence of the small African Union peacekeeping force, and the humanitarian assistance provided by the international community, Darfur would easily fall back into chaos. Indeed, U.N. humanitarian coordinator Manuel Aranda Da Silva said that the situation could deteriorate quickly if foreign assistance stops coming.

In addition, rape is still a widespread tactic utilized by government and its militia, as well as forced military recruitment of young people. According to officials from the United Nations High Committee on Refugees, areas outside peacekeeping observation remain very dangerous. As such, the United States must maintain its pressure on the Sudanese government, and clearly convey to them that any improvement in relations between our two countries is contingent on resolution of the Darfur crisis.

The religious community is well placed, and equipped with the moral authority, to compel the United States government not to decrease its engagement on the Darfur issue. It is my hope that communities of faith will reflect this coming weekend on the continuing crisis in Darfur—because only when we reflect, will we be emboldened to act. Again, I thank the Gentleman from New Jersey for this resolution, as our struggle for the people of Darfur is far from over.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD that on July 11th of this year, due to unavoidable circumstances, I was unable to be present. If I had been in attendance, I would like the RECORD to reflect that I would have voted in the following manner on these bills:

On H. Con. Res. 168—Condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the abductions and continued captivity of citizens of the Republic of Korea and Japan as acts of terrorism and gross violations of human rights I would have voted "yea."

On H. Res. 333—Supporting the goals and ideals of a National Weekend of Prayer and Reflection for Darfur, Sudan I would have voted "yea."

MILITARY PERSONNEL FINANCIAL SERVICES PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 27, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly support Title II of H.R. 458, the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act. Title II's provisions are especially important as they will help prevent high-cost military lenders from preying on the men and women who are serving in our Armed Forces.

This important measure provides needed protections for military borrowers from various